Beginners Keyboard Manual

for IMPERIAL portable typewriters

By Maxwell Crooks, F.I.P.S. (Hons,) the well-known Typewriting Authority

Learn to TYPE easily by this modern method

THERE are two methods of operating the typewriter keyboard. One is the simple method which you will enjoy following here. The other is any old method, resulting generally in a fumble-fisted effort with one finger of each hand. The simple method is easier because, when you have mastered it, no mental effort is required and the physical effort is reduced to a minimum. The truth is that it is easier to type with all the fingers than with only two fingers.

The process is simple because the task is divided into easy steps or stages. All you have to do is to make sure that you master each step before proceeding to the next. This requires nothing but a little time, patience, and concentration.

Step 1

With your machine you have been supplied with a Keyboard Fingering Chart. This chart shows you how the fingers of each hand are allocated to the keyboard. There is no need to study or memorize this fingering. Turn first to the second row of keys from the bottom. Here you will see eight keys enclosed in a box. These keys (known as the Guide Keys) are:—

a s d f - - j k l ;

Complete mastery of these Guide Keys is essential, because they are the base from which the fingers find and strike all the other keys on the keyboard.

Insert a piece of paper in the machine, in accordance with the instructions. Set the margin stops, also as instructed, because these stops are important in all typewriting work.

Place your fingers on the eight Guide Keys, starting with the little finger on a, the next on s, the next on d, and the next on f. Follow the same procedure with the right hand, placing the little finger on ; and so on. If your fingers are correctly placed you will see that there are two unoccupied keys (g and h) between the two hands.

Your first task is to gain a little facility with your fingers. If, by chance, you play the piano, this will be an easy task. If you have never used your fingers before in this way, be assured that facility is very soon gained if you persist in making the effort with the fingers. For this purpose, make sure that your position at the machine is correct.

The tips of the fingers should rest lightly on the keys, and the fingers must be well bent at the knuckles. Try to sit so that your forearms are sloping upward—more or less at the same slope as that of the keyboard—and with your elbows out from the sides of your body. This enables your fingers to assume the same level as the row of keys, the wrists to be kept low, and the fingers to be used for striking the keys—and not the whole hand or arm.

Now try to strike each key down in turn, starting with the little finger of the left hand. To strike a key, lift the one finger concerned (and not the whole hand) a little above the level of its key, then bring it down smartly on the key, so that you hit the key down, and try to avoid the finger going down with the key. Gradually, also, you must try to do this without the other fingers losing contact with their own keys. This may appear difficult at first, but practice makes it quite easy. Do not worry for the moment about the names of the letters. Just get the fingers working. This is done by striking each key in turn at a slow and regular pace. Count ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-ONE TWO-THREE-FOUR, etc., quite slowly, and concentrate upon your effort with each individual finger, starting always with the little finger of each hand.

When you have acquired a reasonable facility in this way you can begin to associate the movements with the letters. This is done by continuing the same movements, in the same order, whilst looking at the names of the letters as given here:—

`a s d f ; l k j`

Look at each letter whilst striking each corresponding key. This is what is called "Touch Typewriting." It means that you are training each finger to respond to the sight of the letter. Eventually, the sight of each letter causes the corresponding finger to feel the urge to act; and, if your eight fingers are actually on these eight keys, the sight of the letter f, for example, which should cause the first left-hand finger to feel the urge, must result in the letter f appearing on your paper. Therefore, although it has been quite in order to watch your hands in the first part of this work, you are now trying to carry out the same actions without watching, so that the fingers can be trained to react to your sight of the individual letters. Your success will be in proportion to the number of times you repeat this combined reading and finger action.

When you have gained a reasonable facility with these eight Guide Keys, you should add the keys for g and h to your practice. Look at the keyboard and observe that g is next to f, and h is next to j. Therefore, to strike the g key, cause the first finger of the left hand to rise from its guide key, move over, and strike the g key. Similarly, with the right hand, cause the j finger to move over and strike the h key. Do not move the other fingers away from their keys. Make the first fingers do the work for themselves. After a few experimental efforts with these two new keys, substitute the following for the practice you have already been doing:—

↓

a s d f g ; l k j h

The arrow in the above indicates the Space Bar. This should be struck with the right-hand thumb. Make this thumb action a firm, deliberate action, causing the thumb to go down with the Space Bar as far as it will go—instead of the strike-and-let-go action of the fingers on the letter-keys.

Go on repeating this new form of practice. For this purpose, use the whole of the writing line on your paper—starting at the left-hand margin point, and ending when the Type-bars lock. (By the way, you should study the Instructions well, so that items such as the setting of the margin stops are clear to you.)

With constant repetition practice on the above letters, you will gradually find that your fingers are gaining real facility, and that once you read a letter the finger will act without your having to think. Throughout this work, try to return the carriage properly at the end of each line. Contact the Carriage Return Lever with the outside of the left-hand first finger, and throw or push the Carriage until it reaches the set margin point. Do not grasp or hold the Carriage Return Lever for this purpose, as it only slows down the action.

Once you feel you can perform the above Guide Key work reasonably well, begin work on the following:—

```
sad fad gad lad ka; ja; had
```

You will succeed with this practice if you rely entirely upon your reading of the letters, spaces, etc., and upon your fingers properly and permanently placed upon the eight guide keys. If you give way to the desire to look at the keyboard or at the chart, you will only delay your mastery of the keyboard. At first you may make errors. Observe just what is the nature of the error, and practise the word concerned. Then begin the whole exercise again.

Further repetition practice can be performed with the following:—

```
ask a lad; gag a hag;
has dad had a fag;
dad has had a jag;
has a lad had a jaffa;
```

The more repetition you give to each line in turn, the greater will be your skill and the more rapid will be your progress.

Step 2

The above work on the Guide Keys has formed the basis for your mastery of the whole of the keyboard. In this Second Step you are training the first fingers to carry out their part of the work. Examine the chart and note that the first fingers have a double duty to perform, namely, the operation of two vertical "files" of keys. Observe the relative positions of r and c with the key for f; and, similarly, the relative positions of u and n with the key for j. Then place your fingers on the eight Guide Keys again, ready to carry out the following practice:—

fr fc ju jn

You will see that by taking the left-hand first finger upward toward the left, you must strike the required r key; and by taking the same finger downward and toward the left, you must strike the required c key. The same process applies to the right hand. All you have to do is to repeat, over and over again, the movements as directed by the above simple exercise, whilst retaining your sight upon the letters instead of upon the keyboard. Remember to keep all your fingers permanently on the Guide Keys, and to allow only the one finger to make the new movements. This is important. If you spread your fingers in any way, you cannot be sure of finding the key.

Proceed to the following as soon as you can:—

afr afc ;ju ;jn
far fac j;u j;n
raf caf u;j n;j

Now apply this new skill to the following:—

a lad can cart all ash and sand;
an urn has had a crack;
can jack run far;
a nun can run a class;
grandad has drunk a full can;
a rash lad has had a crash;
crush all glass and grass;

Constant repetition of each line, and final repetition of all the lines, will ensure for you the required skill in finding these keys without the aid of sight. The "secret" is to keep your eyes on the letters in the exercise.

The second group of First-finger Keys should not be attacked until you have a complete mastery of the first group. Here are the exercises for the second group. Perform them in exactly the same way as above, and with the same degree of concentration, but first examine the chart or the keyboard and observe the relationship of t and v with f, and y and b with j

fg gt fg gv jh hy jh jb
ft fv jy jb vf tf yj bj
fr ft fc fv ju jy jn jb

Master each line before proceeding to the next. Note how the first fingers have to make a longer stretch for the new keys, because the other three fingers of each hand must remain on their own keys. It is this anchorage of the non-operating fingers that enables you to master the key reaches, so do not neglect this essential. When ready, proceed to the following:—

fag fat fag fav j;h j;y j;h j;b
far fat fac fav j;u j;y j;n j;b

When you can perform the above, work on these "sentences."

hand baby that brass tray;
stack all that hay by that shanty;
a vast cat has had that vast rat;
that naval craft has had a crash;
try that black hat and gray cravat;
cash all drafts at that far bank;

Your task in the above work is to train the mind and the fingers to select between the two keys in each row, operated by the same finger. Therefore, repetition until accuracy in selection is gained is essential. In this practice, errors are important if you observe them and practise the words in which they occur.

Step 3

All the work you have so far carried out has enabled you to accomplish two things. First, it has ensured that you have mastered a substantial part of the keyboard; and secondly it has trained your mind and your fingers for the purpose of key selection and key operation. The rest of the keyboard work is, therefore, comparatively easy, if you work methodically on the exercises for the rest of the fingers. The new keys for the Fourth (or little) Finger are q for the left hand, and p and the fullstop for the right hand. Identify the relationship of these keys with a and ; on the chart or keyboard, and then practise the following:—

aq aa ;p ;.

After some preliminary practice, proceed with the following:—

has that spry lad had any squash.
buy a quart at that happy bar.
has that lady drunk any aqua pura.
stand up and play that part.
pack that quadrant and strap up that bag.
hurry up and squash that nasty fly.

The keys for the Second Finger should be identified from the chart, and then mastered with the aid of the following exercise:—

de dx ki km ed xd ik mk

Proceed as before, with the following practice:—

ask the manager if he likes plum pie;
many men prefer reading in silence.
check the fines and file the receipts.
fix the deal with six mixed heifers;
drive his sister back in his carriage.
the vexed vicar winced at the remark.

The final group of keys are those for the Third Finger. In the exercises for this finger, therefore, you will be using all the keys on the keyboard, so far as the alphabet is concerned. Practise the preliminary exercise first, and then proceed to the sentences:—

sw sz lo l, ws zs ol ,l

Proceed to the following when you can type the preliminary exercise without hesitation.

chop down the tree and saw up the wood.
he went away, and he will not come back.
quit your old job and begin this new work.
the crazy woman insisted upon winding the wool.
six zebras wandered along the empty street.
a hazy sky made the visibility poor.
be zealous, study zoology, and pass the exam.

Before proceeding to the Fourth and Final Step, spend some time in revising all the exercises, and also in practising the following sentences. These sentences are formed with a "rhythmic" pattern, to assist you in maintaining a regular or even pace with your key-striking.

ask the janitor for the address
buy his cycles, and his garage.
mix the vinegar and the mustard
all her dresses are not crushed
she was zealous but not anxious
now act quickly and buy dozens.

Step 4

For capital letters the Shift Key must be held down whilst striking the letter-key. There is a Shift Key on either side of the keyboard, so that the left-hand Shift Key can be used if the letter is a right-hand letter, and vice-versa. To operate the Shift Key, drop the hand down from the Guide Keys so that the little finger contacts and depresses the Shift Key. Hold the key down until you have struck the required letter-key, and then return the hand promptly to the Guide Keys. For your first effort, try counting from one to four whilst making the following movements:—

Count ONE	Strike the letter f
Count TWO	Depress and hold the Shift Key
Count THREE	Strike the letter F
Count FOUR	Return the hand to the Guide Keys

Repeat the same movements with the letter J (using the left hand for the Shift Key). As facility is gained, you will not need so long a pause on the Shift Key, but it is always essential to complete the letter-key strike before releasing the Shift Key. The following sentences will assist you to gain facility:—

Ask Mary, Joan and Kitty to tea.
You should visit York, Bradford and Durham.
Make a Bakewell Tart and some Maids of Honour.
Let George, Bobbie and Frank join the Tennis Club.
Mr. and Mrs. Gray called the twins Zoe and Zena.
The first three horses were Grecco, Halley and
Quinn.

5

Final instructions

In the above, you have been concerned solely with the mastery of the key reaches for the letters and punctuation marks. On the keyboard you will see that there is a row of figures and extra characters, and also fraction keys, etc., on the right of the keyboard. There is no real need to master the fraction keys, as the sight can be used for the infrequent occasions when they occur, but it is as well to use the Fourth Finger for all these keys at the right of the keyboard.

Some attention should, however, be given to the figure keys and to the extra characters that appear above them. In order to use the correct fingers for this purpose, the following exercises can be practised:—

fq1 fw2 fe3 fr4 ft5 jp0 jo9 ji8 ju7 jy6

If your keyboard does not have a figure 1 you must use the small l(el) for this numeral.

fq* fw" fe/ fr@ ft£ jp) jo(ji' ju& jy_

Use this exercise for the Extra Characters:—

fw" fe/ fr@ jp) jp= jo(ji' ju& jy_

The Shift Key must be used for the extra characters, of course. Note that where the asterisk is not provided, it is necessary to type the small x, back space and then type the hyphen over it. Similarly, an exclamation mark is made by typing the apostrophe, back spacing, and then typing the full stop underneath it.

In order to gain complete familiarity with the keyboard you should carry out as much copying as you can, from clearly printed copy. Take paragraphs of about ten lines, and repeat them four or five times. This form of practice should precede any lengthy copying, or any form of work where you are compiling original matter straight on to the machine.

Here are some additional notes to aid you in your copying:—

A Quarto paper and double line spacing are generally used for literary matter, with a one-inch margin at top, left and bottom, and a half-inch margin on the right.

B Letters are usually typed in single line spacing, with an extra line space between paragraphs. In letters and general typewriting work the first line of each paragraph begins five spaces in from the left-hand margin point.

C An extra line space must always appear between paragraphs in single line-spacing, but not between paragraphs typed in double line-spacing.

D When dividing words at line ends, use the hyphen key (next to the nought in the top row). This hyphen key is used for normal hyphens without any spaces, but when the hyphen is used for a dash, there must be a space before and after the hyphen.

E Headings are typed in capital letters, using the Shift Lock instead of the Shift Key. Underline headings with the Underscore—that is the character over the Figure 6. This character forms a continuous line, and can also be used for ruling.

F Always give one space after a comma, semicolon or colon, and two spaces after a fullstop, question mark or exclamation mark.

PRINTED IN ENGLAND

REF T.75

Imperial Service

within your reach

There is an Imperial Agent within easy reach who is fully equipped for sales and service of Imperial Typewriters.

"Imperitype" ribbons, carbons, stencils, and everything you need in connection with your typewriter can be obtained from your Imperial agent.

Imperial Typewriter Co Ltd Leicester & Hull. London Office: 85 Kingsway W.C.2. Agents throughout the World